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ABSTRACT

Important steps in building a multicultural curriculum are the development of specific criteria for cultural inclusion, use of different methods of instruction in the classroom, and implementation of in-service programs for the continual retraining of teachers. Various state departments have developed criteria for inclusion, and these can be used by school systems as a basis to develop their own criteria. However, school systems should go directly to the ethnic communities, where possible, for direction in the cultural concepts to be included in the curriculum and for examination of texts and other resource materials based on the criteria. Where ethnic groups are not available, the school system can use criteria written by other people or organizations of that same culture group. A theme approach to teaching is preferable to a chronological approach, but course content may need to be reorganized before it is possible to use the theme approach. Schools should develop programs to retrain teachers in both knowledge and methodology so that teachers can successfully include all cultures on an equal basis in their classrooms. In addition to being more beneficial to diverse ethnic groups, multicultural programs also are more likely to be permanent than are more narrow based programs. (CM)

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CROSS CULTURAL EDUCATION
SOME ADMINISTRATIVE AND CURRICULUM CONCERNS*

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INTRODUCTION

The other day I visited a public elementary school in Chicago's northside Uptown area and had a most interesting time, which I'll talk about in a moment. Uptown itself is the entry point for many of the ethnic, national, and racial groups when they come to Chicago to take up residence. For example, Senn High School, which serves the area and also serves the school I visited, has a student body where 31 different first languages are spoken, and where 63 different first or second languages are spoken. Incredible! Unless such a school, wherever located, has a teacher training policy which gives primary emphasis to multicultural in-service education, much of the student body, and all of the school, will suffer, because students will feel excluded from the mainstream, and you know where student exclusion leads to in the schools.

Such suffering has taken place at Senn in the past 25 years. Senn, which formerly had been one of the top public schools in the region, dropped rapidly in student achievement as the homogeneous white English speaking population was changed to include non-white, non-English speaking students. 25 years ago, students were expected to turn into white, English speaking people! Some say that Senn's student body was diluted by this change; others say that it was enriched. In either case, the achievement levels were rapidly diminished. The cause can be traced in large measure to the non-acceptance by much of the faculty and staff that the student body had become multicultural and their subsequent unwillingness to do something about it. The effect has been lowered achievement scores. The solution lies partially in large doses of teacher training in the areas I'll be talking about later.

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As I remarked a moment ago when I started, I visited a gym class in an elementary school in Uptown the other day. A half-dozen children were running uncontrollably around the periphere of the organized activity, causing the principal who was showing me around to remark, "They're really behaving like a bunch of wild Indians today, aren't they?" Another half dozen or so children were sitting over against the wall, heads down, not seeming to participate with the others at all. When our attention was called over there, the principal went on, "And they're taking their daily siesta."

I. MULTICULTURAL VIS-A-VIS BICULTURAL

For the past few years, in many sections of the country, when black and white children got together in desegregated schools, it was often under the watchful eye of a teacher who was alert to prevent or curb racial slurs or innuendos. But what if you're neither white nor black, and the principal comments as he did before? If you're an American Indian child, or a Mexican-American child (and that school has plenty of both), what do you do? Or if you are a black or white child who has learned all about racial slurs and who doesn't want his or her principal to act like that, what do you do? Chances are, nothing. If you're young, maybe you go off confused and cry a little, but there's nothing really for a child to say. That has to be left up to you and me to say something to that principal to make a difference.

Some time ago, as many PTA's do, brochures were sent home with my children, urging parents to attend the PTA meetings at school. Good programs were planned and, in my opinion, PTA officials are some of the finest people a school can have. Nevertheless, here's a description of one of the brochures. There were pictured caricatures of four children of different races, each one saying something to let the parents know that the children wanted them to attend. The white child had long hair, a nice smile, and said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah," the type of words that were often heard on the pop stations in my area: white popular music. The black child had an Afro haircut, a nice smile, and had his fist raised in a gentle-appearing way, while he said, "Right on, brother." These two caricatures were supportive of positive aspects

of the culture. In all probability, neither black people nor white people would feel demeaned by these pictures. The third child was an Indian. Although he, too, had a nice smile, he wore an Indian headdress and said, "Ugh!" The Asian child's spoken words were, "Ah, soo!"

Many white children in the school have long hair and at least when they listen to their transistors, pop their fingers and sing "Yeah, yeah, yeah." Many black children have Afros, raise their fist on occasion, and say "Right on."

These two are caricatures, but not harmful ones. But no Indian children that I know of come to school wearing a headdress, and certainly by the time they're in kindergarten, they can say more than "Ugh." A demeaning caricature, to say the least. And no Asian children I know of try to communicate with their parents, teachers, or classmates by saying "Ah soo."

All four pictures were stereotypes with an element of truth in them, but two at least gave a positive supportive image to children. The other two caricatures were relics of days long past.

When this was brought to the attention of the PTA, the response was one of mortification and personal apology. Friendly as it is, however, apology is not the answer. Somehow, we felt relationships must get beyond skin color and get into those of a common humanity.

The PTA committee was quite sensitive to black/white relations; it was the non-black/non-white awareness that was lacking. It is important to recognize that "multi-cultural" is not"bi-cultural." Because that is how it has frequently been viewed, it is in fact why new problems have emerged while old ones were still being addressed. While problems between whites and blacks were being illuminated (not eliminated, by the way), problems among other cultural groups were being ignored, and thereby exacerbated. So that while the schools thought they were solving problems of race (and they were in fact being well addressed), problems of culture began to emerge. White and black school administrators and board members, while locking arms with each other, began locking horns with the curriculum

and cultural intrusion of non-whites and non-blacks. Mono-cultural had become bi-cultural --- but we have found that that has not been enough. It has been hard to move forward from bi-culturalism to multi-culturalism.

An urban trend I note that is causing concern is this. As city people whose origins are south of the United States border gain numbers and seek influence, they also often tend to become bi-cultural and not multi-cultural. There is occasionally being formed a white/Latino alliance which is becoming exclusionary of not only blacks, but of other cultural groups.

I recognize that bi-lingual centers, for example, by their very name, bi-lingual have an avowed purpose, and that common wisdom is that these are Latino programs as opposed to black programs (The Blacks have their own!). But this has been one of education's problems, that one segment of the population has accumulated programs for themselves and are loath to share them. So I would urge those bi-lingual programs which have not done so, to become multi-cultural as rapidly as possible, including non-Latinos and non-whites on their governing boards and on their professional staffs.

For one thing, such inclusion will insure longer program life. Government programs that became black programs, if you recall, declined in favor of what the government calls multi-cultural programs. The extent to which the latter became Latino programs, or Asian programs or Indian programs, as opposed to multi-cultural programs, will probably be the extent to which they also decline. Government officials receive new pressures all the time, and another group will gain the ascendency if its needs are not addressed. A program has more chance for permanence if it is in a real sense multi-cultural.

But for another thing, it is good for this country and for the many diverse groups in it for multi-cultural programs to be broad in their approach. I recognize that single-issue groups can achieve and wield great power, and temptation to dwell on a single issue is therefore strong. But basically, a single-issue group ultimately has only the power to destroy, not the power to build. The "right-to-lifers," for example, have recently gained inordinate

power in various parts of the country. They have succeeded in diverting many HMO governing boards and administrative staffs from their broader functions of health care and maintenance. They are in effect destroying the organizations by diverting them from their avowed and publicly approved goals. If they were not so intent on destruction, and if they would achieve memberships on these boards from a broader perspective than the abortion issue, they would be building for permanence. People would come to respect their leadership in other areas and thereby be more willing to accept their leadership in abortion. As it is, their single issue is merely divisive and destructive, and finally will prove to be self-destructive.

There are many such examples in education, as well. I see a similar thing happening in several bi-lingual programs, where people get all roiled up, for example, on the teaching of Spanish for a certain number of hours for a certain number of days per week to a certain number of children, while at the same time ignoring other educational needs of Latino children and, just as important, ignoring some basic educational needs of other cultural groups.

Participate broadly in policy-making; become part of many issues, even when the don't deal directly with your programs. Show leadership, for example, in math or science or phys ed curriculum concerns, not only in the language or social studies programs. If you are of Latin American descent, show leadership by including Asians or American Indians or blacks or whites on your boards, administrative staffs and in the programs generally. People will still know who's boss, who controls the funds.

I know this may fall hard on some of the conference participants who feel you have been historically left out and only now are finally starting to get in, but I'm asking you to think of permanence. Single issues simply do not last.

An example of what I'm trying to say is the institution where I'm employed. It is called the Native American Educational Services, or NAES, and is a private Indian college which grants an accredited bachelor's degree. Most governmental Indian programs, as you know, are fraught with white missionaries, anthropologists, or administrators. NAES, however, is private and non-governmental. We receive

no government program money. Our college has four sites: the Chicago Indian community which is inter-tribal, and three reservation sites: the Northern Cheyenne and Fort Peck reservations in Montana, and the Santo Domingo Pueblo in New Mexico. NAES' governing board is 70% Indian; the administration and faculty are all Indian, except for me; and the student body, with one exception, is all Indian. With all that, we are making a deliberate and definite movement to broaden our constituency. This summer we are holding a summer session open to non-Indians --- teachers and others --- as well as our own students. One of our purposes, at least in this instance, is to get away from being a one-issue institution. This does not diminish the Indianness of our college; all it does is broaden support.

So I say the same thing to you. For permanence, broaden your organizations to include more than one issue, more than one cultural group. Make it multi-cultural. Multi-issue groups tend to last, and multi-cultural is not the same as bi-cultural.

II. CURRICULUM CONSIDERATIONS

The old phrase, Pull yourselves up by your own bootstraps, has not become passé. It still heard, although occasionally in different forms. My wife was working for a large clothing distributor in Chicago. The firm was being pressed to broaden its employment practices to include people whose first language is Spanish. A typical response was. "We had to learn English when we came, so how come you get to speak Spanish and we still have to hire you?" I suspect you've heard that one before.--- Several months ago I saw an update of a Herblock cartoon from the '60s. It also has a bearing on our look at curriculum today. It was a picture of a person being told to pull himself up by his bootstraps--- but when he did, it was found that he had no soles in his boots. The foundation was missing. And so it is in the curriculum found today. The multi-cultural foundation is missing.

2nd or 3rd graders study about Indians, where several classes build tepees, make clothes that Indians used to wear, and have a speaker from the local Indian center. But this doesn't help

an Indian child today, any more than it has helped the Sioux as a nation to regain some of the wealth and beauty of the Black Hills for their own use. Nor does it help a non-Indian child become aware of Indian people as modern United States cultures.

My hunch, however, is that as the school children build the tepees and listen to the schools' versions of Indian lore they are, in their own minds, making relics of the Indians attending school and living on reservations. Descendents of each racial group or nationality who came to this country over the past hundreds of years live in the present and in the United States. My forbears, for example, are not pictured as running around in armor today and running people through with lances; or in wooden shoes strenuously scrubbing the roofs of their houses. Those are interesting parts of history to be read with pride. But in relating to one another, we should see ourselves as we are today, in a world of which we are now a part.

With that kind of understanding in the schools non-Indian Americans will no longer view Indian people as in the past, but in modern, realistic terms. Thus, Indians of today can begin to cope with the ethnocentric behavior toward them simply because this behavior will lessen. When we talk about multi-cultural curriculum, this is what we're talking about.

In the fourth grades, children study the old world roots of American history; in other words, Mesopotamia and the River Nile and ancient Egypt. But not a word about Central or South America or Mexico, although America's roots are strong there, too. That comes as an appendage, sometimes as early as the seventh grade, but usually not seriously until high school. Not a word about China as being a forerunner to the understanding of the roots of certain parts of American history.

In the fifth grades the children study American history itself, but always with a European perspective in mind; even more specific, from an English perspective. Colonial history to many of our citizens means something quite different than the original 13 colonies being colonialized by the English government. To be sure, it may include that, but it would also include Cuba as a modern-day American colony where Teddy Roosevelt's charge up San Juan Hill would be viewed as something less glorious than the fifth grade

textbooks make it appear; it would include Euro-American involvement in the Opium Wars of the 1840s, which would mean something more than the "enlightened opening of the Orient to Christianity and American business and trade;" it would include the diminution of Indian and Mexican lands through wars and treaties, and the breaking of those treaties even to this very day in history. What I'm saying is that multi-cultural curriculum inclusion in the past 15 years or so, is often more talked about than real.

There are at least two things that can be done to foster multi-cultural inclusion in the curriculum, and I once again go back to the importance of in-service teacher training as the primary means for carrying them out. The first has to do with the development of specific criteria for cultural inclusion; the second, with using different methods of instruction in the classrooms.

A. CRITERIA FOR CULTURAL INCLUSION IN THE CLASSROOM

Curriculum "experts" are easy to come by. They are usually found in schools of education in universities, and in central offices in school systems. They often tend to become experts in a specific area of curriculum, especially one which deals with a cultural, racial, or ethnic group; and most especially when the government makes large amounts of money available for program use with such groups. Now of course I'm old enough to know that that practice is not going to change much. Administrators will continue to flock where the program money is! But I'd like to make clear where these folks should go to receive advice for cultural inclusion for curriculum building. I have pointed out where the non-experts are --- and they are often the educational or anthropological professionals. But the real experts of an understanding of a culture are not these people; rather, they are the members of that culture themselves. So it is the latter people that can provide the expertise necessary to determine what aspects or concepts of their culture should be available for public school consumption.

Various state departments of education have developed criteria for inclusion (see References for one such list), and those lists

of criteria that I have examined are worthy. They should be used by the school systems as a basis to develop their own criteria. To be more specific, those school systems --- and urban areas should have no problems here --- should go directly to the indigenous communities and charge the community people themselves with directing the school people as to cultural concepts to be included in the curriculum. In my experience, community people are eager to do this very thing. But once such people are organized to help, their production of a list of criteria is not enough. They should be urged to take the next step and examine the texts and library books, and other resource materials, based on that list of criteria. Once that is accomplished, the in-service training programs for teachers can begin in earnest.

Going back to the printed criteria lists --- if the indigenous people I spoke of are not available, then the school system can revert to criteria expressed in writing by other people or organizations of that same culture group. For example, if there are no Indian people that can be tapped in your community, there are at least two Indian sources which have spelled out criteria for inclusion of Indians in the curriculum. They have also taken it the next step of examination of books and other materials, and have made purchase recommendations based on those lists. One such source is the American Indian Historical Society in San Francisco, publishers of a book entitled Textbooks and the American Indian. They not only present criteria lists in the various school subjects, but also for the study of American Indians themselves (referring to my previous comments on second and third graders and their study of Indian people). Using the criteria listed in that book, many second and third grade teachers would find themselves swimming in completely different waters.

The second source is the National Indian Education Association and its recently revised study called Project MEDIA (Media Evaluations and Dissemination by Indian Americans). That publication includes a massive listing of books and other materials judged against NIEA criteria.

But whatever you choose, live people or the printed word, somehow criteria for curriculum evaluation from indigenous communities must be sought for and accepted by the schools. To do less is neither moral nor educationally sound.

B. DIFFERENT METHODS

A final point in our discussion on curriculum is the need to employ teaching methods that are different from those which many teachers use today. These are not new methods I'm suggesting, and I'm going to be very specific.

In the example of Senn High School in Chicago's Uptown, cited before, and its student population including 31 first languages, how is it possible to include cultural studies of all 31 cultures, unless the school becomes hopelessly fragmented and the student body isolated from each other?

In the first place, it might call for a teacher or department to reorganize the course content. Rather than taking a chronological approach to U.S. history, a theme approach might be taken. The themes might include such items as United States wars, religions, colonization, capitalism, etc. Then, after basic lectures and readings have been presented, small classroom groups would be assigned to develop the theme as it affects various cultural groups in the school, or community. For example, how has the American view of, say, religion affected, for example, Chinese people living in the community? For a class of 30 students divided into seven groups, over a two-week period a class could have studied and presented cultural concerns of seven different American populations; after a month, seven more; and so on. And all in the legitimate name of American history. (For a specific treatment of theme teaching, note under References the article by Krumbein and Beck.)

The whole idea of teaching by themes is really not much more difficult than I have just described it, and the results are quite broadening for those students involved and for the school as a whole. What has prevented such instruction thus far has simply been that some teachers and textbooks are so entrenched in their traditional chronological approach to the social studies that they haven't been able to see the potential in teaching by themes.

SUMMARY

My general theme is that continual re-training of teachers through in-service programs is needed to keep them up to date regarding cultural inclusion in the schools, and your programs have the capability, and in some cases the obligation, of providing such training.

The American school population is different today from that of a quarter century ago, or even 10 years ago. 25 years ago the schools could demand that the white English-speaking norm was the one to be taught. By 10 years ago, at least in some cases, black people and culture were also included. Now is the time for multi-cultures to be included. The task will be increasingly difficult as we recognize and try to deal with our heterogeneous population. The job, however, will be easier if we educators can learn from the recent past and develop new programs therefrom, finally to include all cultures on an equal basis, share and share alike, so that they too may be fully recognized and partake of the wealth of goods and services available to all Americans through their schools.

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